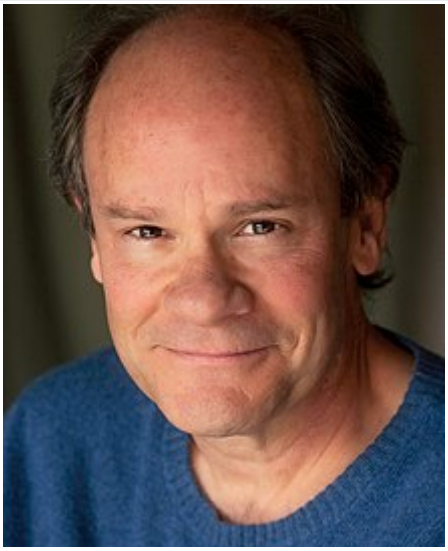
Ethan Phillips

Ethan Phillips (born **John Ethan Phillips** February 8, 1955) is an American actor and playwright. He is best known for his television roles as Neelix on *Star Trek: Voyager* and PR man Pete Downey on *Benson*.

Ethan Phillips	
 Phillips in 2009	
Born	February 8, 1955 Garden City, New York, U.S.
Education	Boston University (BA) Cornell University (MFA)
Occupation(s)	Actor, playwright
Years active	1977–present
Spouse	Patricia Cresswell (m. 1990; died 2022)

Personal life

Phillips was raised on Long Island, New York. His father was the owner of Frankie & Johnnie's, a steakhouse on 45th and Eighth Avenue in New York City.[1] He received a bachelor's degree in English literature from Boston University and a Master of Fine Arts from Cornell University. He plays the tenor saxophone in the Alan Wasserman Jazz Band.

Career

Theatre

Ethan Phillips began his show business career in New York City, performing off-Broadway at theaters including Direct Theater, winning the Best of the Actors' Festival there in 1977; at the Wonderhorse Theater, in the premiere of Christopher Durang's *The Nature and Purpose of the Universe*; and at Playwrights Horizons in a revival of *Eccentricities of a Nightingale*. Tennessee Williams, who helped shape the latter production, wrote a new monologue for Phillips, which Williams personally dictated to him when it was realized that leading lady Jill Eikenberry needed more time for a dress change.

In 1979–80, Phillips appeared as Maurice Utrillo in the premier of Dennis McIntyre's *Modigliani*, with Jeffrey DeMunn, at the Astor Place Theater. It ran for 208 performances.

Phillips performed in many plays in New York over the next fifteen years, including Terrence McNally's *Lips Together, Teeth Apart* at the Lucille Lortel, *Measure for Measure* with Kevin Kline at The Public Theater's Delacorte Theater; and the Broadway premier of *My Favorite Year* at Lincoln Center, with Andrea Martin and Tim Curry, as well as new works for Ars Nova (theater), Ensemble Studio Theatre, Playwrights Horizons,[2] the Hudson Guild Theater,[3] the American Jewish Theater,[4] and many others.

He went on to appear in the premier of David Mamet's November with Nathan Lane and Laurie Metcalf at the Ethel Barrymore Theater and performed it once more with John Malkovich and Patti Lupone for Stars in the House. He played the title character opposite Peter Dinklage in *The Imaginary Invalid* for Bard College's 2012 SummerScape Festival. In 2013-14 he appeared as Stanley Levison in Robert Schenkkan's *All the Way* at the American Repertory Theater. Phillips moved with the show to Broadway's Neil Simon

Theater where the play won the Tony Award for Best Play and Best Actor, Bryan Cranston. More recently Phillips played leading roles in the premiers of Dennis Kelly's *Taking Care of Baby*, Terrence McNally's *Golden Age*, and Sharyn Rothstein's *By the Water*, all for the Manhattan Theatre Club (off-Broadway). Most recently, Ethan played Murray Lefkowitz in the Broadway premier of Ayad Akhtar's *Junk: The Golden Age of Debt* at Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater.

Phillips' regional theater credits include leading roles for San Diego's Old Globe Theater, the Alaska Repertory Theater,[5] at Seattle Repertory Theater, at Baltimore's Centerstage, for the Westport Country Playhouse, Boston Shakespeare Company, Actors Theater of Louisville, The American Repertory Theater, the Salt Lake Acting Co.,[6] and the McCarter Theatre.[7] In Los Angeles, Phillips acted in *Side Man* at the Pasadena Playhouse, in *Lips Together, Teeth Apart* for the Mark Taper Forum; in *You Can't Take It with You* at the Geffen Playhouse, in *The Bourgeois Gentleman* for the Pasadena Symphony, and as Polonius in *Hamlet* for the Uprising Theater.[8]

Phillips has been an actor at the Sundance Institute's Playwrights Conference in Utah for six summers, where he developed his play *Penguin Blues* (https://www.amazon.com/dp/0573623910/ref=cm_sw_em_r_mt_dp_9Q1FFbVE2FX3F), which is published by Samuel French Inc.[9] and is included in *The Best Short Plays of 1989* (Applause, ed. Ramon Delgado). Based on his experiences at Sundance,[10] Phillips helped found First Stage, a playwright development lab in Los Angeles.

Films

Phillips has appeared in over fifty films, beginning with *Ragtime* (directed by Miloš Forman). Other features include *For Richer or Poorer*, *Jeffrey*, *The Shadow*, *Wagons East*, *The Man Without a Face*, *Green Card*, *Lean On Me*, *Critters*, *Bloodhounds of Broadway*, *The Island*, *Bad Santa*, and *The Babysitters*. More recent films include *Shadow Witness*, *Audrey*, the Coen Brothers' *Inside Llewyn Davis*, Woody Allen's *Irrational Man*, and James DeMonaco's *The Purge: Election Year*.

Television

In 1980, Phillips joined the cast of the sitcom *Benson*, playing PR man Pete Downey for five seasons.

He has made scores of guest appearances on television series and tele films, including *Pushing Daisies*, *Bones (TV Series)*, *Eli Stone*, *Criminal Minds*, *NUMB3RS*, *Las Vegas*, *L.A. Law*, *JAG*, *Law & Order*, *Arrested Development*, *Boston Legal*, *Castle*, *Rizzoli & Isles*, *The Good Guys* and *The Mentalist*, *Deadbeat*, *The Good Wife*, *New Amsterdam (2018 TV series)*, *Better Call Saul* and *Veep*. He played the recurring role of Keith in the final two seasons of Lena Dunham's *Girls*. He currently plays Spike Martin in Armando Iannucci's space comedy *Avenue 5* on HBO.

In 1990, he began his *Star Trek* career playing the Ferengi doctor Farek in the "Ménage à Troi" episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. He went on to play the Talaxian character Neelix on *Star Trek: Voyager* in 1995, and stayed with the series through its entire seven-season run. He also cameoed as a holographic nightclub maître d' in the 1996 film *Star Trek: First Contact*, and appeared as a Ferengi pirate captain in the "Acquisition" episode of *Star Trek: Enterprise*.

Phillips has also performed voice work for several of the *Star Wars* franchise video games: 2000's *Star Wars: Force Commander*, 2001's *Star Wars: Galactic Battlegrounds*, and 2003's *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*.

Filmography

Film

Year	Title	Role	Notes
1981	*Ragtime*	Guard At Family House	
1986	*Critters*	Jeff Barnes	
1987	*Burglar*	Bartender At Parker's On Fifth	
1989	*Lean on Me*	Mr. Rosenberg	
	Glory	Hospital Steward	
	Bloodhounds of Broadway	Basil Valentine	
1990	*Green Card*	INS Agent Gorsky	
1991	*Critters 3*	Deputy	
1993	*Rain Without Thunder*	The Gynecologist	
	The Man Without a Face	Todd Lansing	
1994	*The Shadow*	Nelson	
	Wagons East	Commander S. L. Smedly	
1995	*Jeffrey*	Dave	
1996	*Star Trek: First Contact*	Holodeck Nightclub Maitre d'	Uncredited
1997	*Trekkies*	Himself	
	For Richer or Poorer	Jerry	
1998	*The Battery*	Bernard	Short film
2000	*Endsville*	Terry Festinger	
	9mm of Love	Guy	
2002	*The Wild Thornberrys Movie*	Loris	Uncredited
2003	*Rugrats Go Wild*	Toa The Monkey	Voice
	Bad Santa	Roger Merman	
2004	*Trekkies 2*	Himself	Documentary
	Geeks	Himself	Documentary
2005	*The Island*	Jones Three Echo	
2006	*Chestnut: Hero of Central Park*	Marty	
2007	*Keith*	Mr. Miles	
	Have Dreams, Will Travel (aka *A West Texas Children's Story*)	Businessman	

	The Babysitters	Mark Kessler	
	California Dreaming	Wayne Porter	
2010	*Dahmer vs. Gacy*	X-13[11]	
2012	*Arachnoquake*	Roy	
	The Adventures of RoboRex	Randy Jenkins	
2013	*Inside Llewyn Davis*	Mitch Gorfein	
2014	*Audrey*	Donny	
2015	*Irrational Man*	Jill's Father	
2016	*The Purge: Election Year*	Chief Couper	
	Miles	Mr. Wilson	
2017	*Future '38*	Dr. Elcourt	
2018	*Most Likely to Murder*	Bobby Green	

Television

Year	Title	Role	Notes
1980–1985	*Benson*	Peter "Pete" John Downey	Seasons 2-6
1983	*One Life to Live*	Mr. Darrin	2 episodes
	Hart to Hart	Redstone	Episode: "Pandora Has Wings"
1985	*Three's a Crowd*	Ronnie Pine	Episode: "Jack Gets Trashed"
	The Twilight Zone	Deaver	Segment: "Devil's Alphabet"
1986	*Hunter*	State Department Man	Episode: "High Noon in L.A."
1987	*Outlaws*	Vernon Buckley	Episode: "Jackpot"
	Werewolf	Eddy Armando	
1990	*Star Trek: The Next Generation*	Dr. Farek	Episode: "Ménage à Troi"
	Doogie Howser, M.D.	Advertiser	Episode: "Ask Dr. Doogie"
1990-1993	*L.A. Law*	Dr. Sam Waibel / Marvin Pick	2 episodes
1991	*Father Dowling Mysteries*	Leonard Spalding	Episode: "The Monkey Business Mystery"
	Murphy Brown	Richard Cooper	Episode: "Everytime It Rains... You Get Wet"
1992	*Law & Order*	Mark Hauser	Episode: "Helpless"
1993	*NYPD Blue*	Dwight	Episode: "True Confessions"
1994	*The Mommies*	Omelette Chef	Episode: "Mommies Day"
1995	*Platypus Man*	Vern Tuttle	Episode: "Pilot"
1995–2001	*Star Trek: Voyager*	Neelix	Main cast, 170 episodes

1995	*Maybe This Time*	Douglas	Episode: "Judgment Day"
1996	*Chicago Hope*	Bob Stewart	Episode: "Sexual Perversity in Chicago Hope"
	Homeboys in Outer Space	Inspector 17	Episode: "House Party or, Play That Funky White Music Droid"
1998	*From the Earth to the Moon*	Stanley Craig	TV miniseries Episode: "We Interrupt This Program"
1998	*The Lost World*	Copy Boy	TV movie
2002	*Rugrats*	Storyteller (voice)	Episode: "Quiet, Please"/"Early Retirement"
	Star Trek: Enterprise	Ulis, Group Leader of Ferengi Thieves	Episode: "Acquisition"
	Rocket Power	Shop Owner (voice)	Episode: "Less Than Full Otto"/"Card Sharked"
	Half & Half	Dr. Adelman	Episode: "The Big Award Episode"
	Providence	Finch	Episode: "Truth and Consequences"
2003	*Touched by an Angel*	Wally	Episode: "The Show Must Not Go On"
	Rock Me Baby	The Doctor	Episode: "Pretty in Pink Eye"
2004	*8 Simple Rules*	Dave	Episode: "YMCA"
	JAG	Mr. Worley	Episode: "Take It Like a Man"
	Arrested Development	Military Officer	Episode: "Whistler's Mother"
	Oliver Beene	Mr. Stitt	2 episodes
2005	*Las Vegas*	Gabe Labrador	Episode: "Double Down, Triple Threat"
2006	*Numb3rs*	Professor Leonard	Episode: "Double Down"
	Criminal Minds	Marvin Doyle	Episode: "A Real Rain"
	Boston Legal	Michael Schiller	3 episodes
	The War at Home	Bob Cooper	Episode: "Be Careful What You Ask For"
2007	*Cavemen*	"Red" Goldreyer	
	Super Sweet 16: The Movie	Craig	TV movie
	Hallowed Ground	The Preacher	TV movie
	Star Trek: Of Gods and Men	Data Clerk	Miniseries
2008	*Eli Stone*	Principal Ackerman	Episode: "I Want Your Sex"
	Bones	Checker Box Manager	Episode: "The Wannabe in the Weeds"
	Pushing Daisies	Daniel Hill	Episode: "Robbing Hood"
2009	*Mental*	Hollis Breyer	Episode: "Book of Judges"
	True Blood	Parish Coroner	Episode: "Shake and Fingerpop" Uncredited
2010	*Rizzoli & Isles*	John J. Murray	Episode: "I Kissed a Girl"
	The Good Guys	Alphonse LaViolette	Episode: "Common Enemies"
	The Middle	The Chairman	Episode: "The Quarry"

	Days of Our Lives	Mr. Satterfield	Episode #1.11456
	Castle	James Farnham	Episode: "The Final Nail"
	The Mentalist	Newsome Kirk	Episode: "The Red Mile"
2011	*The Young and the Restless*	Nelson McGinnis	Episode: "Tucker Is Taken Off Life Support"
	Chuck	Woodley	Episode: "Chuck Versus the Zoom"
2012	*Arachnoquake*	Roy	TV movie
2014	*Deadbeat*	Jack Donaldson	Episode: "Calamityville Horror"
2015	*Veep*	Mr. Wallace	2 episodes
	The Good Wife	Dr. Morris Weiner	Episode: "Tracks"
2016	*All the Way*	Joe Alsop	TV movie Uncredited
2016–2017	*Girls*	Keith	5 episodes
2016	*Younger*	Paul	Episode: "Summer Friday"
	Dallas & Robo	Bob (voice)	Episode: "I Was a Teenage Cannibal Biker"
2018	*Better Call Saul*	Judge Benedict Munsinger	2 episodes: "Talk" and "Coushatta"
	New Amsterdam	Dan Marken	Episode: "Anthropocene"
2020	*Avenue 5*	Spike Williams	Main cast

Stage

Year	Title	Role	Theatre
1992	*My Favorite Year*	Herb Lee	Vivian Beaumont Theater
2008	*November*	Turkey Rep	Ethel Barrymore Theatre
2014	*All the Way*	Stanley Levison	Neil Simon Theatre
2017	*Junk: The Golden Age of Debt*	Murray Lefkowitz	Vivian Beaumont Theater

Video games

Year	Title	Role	Notes
2000	*Star Trek: Voyager – Elite Force*	Neelix	Voice
	Star Wars: Force Commander	Transport Pilot, Governor of Abridon	
2001	*Star Wars: Galactic Battlegrounds*	Empire Medical Droid, Krantian Governor, Royal Grenade Trooper	
2003	*Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*	Galon Lor (Korriban), Tamlen, Hrakert Mercenary, Dantooine Civilian, Various	
2004	*Syphon Filter: The Omega Strain*	Broussard, Canadian Prime Minister	
2014	*Star Trek Online*	Neelix	

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4. "Jewish Theater of New York Homepage" (http://www.jewishtheater.org/). *www.jewishtheater.org*.
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11. "Motion Picture Purgatory: The Moth Diaries - Dread Central" (http://www.dreadcentral.com/news/32988/dahmer-vs-gacy-whoever-wins-wtf). 19 April 2012.

Further reading

- *The Star Trek Cookbook* - Ethan Philips and William J. Birnes (ISBN 0-671-00022-5)

External links

- Ethan Phillips (https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0680392/) at IMDb

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